<u>**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**</u>

1-9.    (Canceled).

10.    (Original)    A method for detecting affinity breaks between a client and a server equipped with a cache in a software system for distributed web applications, comprising:

the client sending a request to the server, accompanied by a numeric-valued generation ID (GID);

the server receiving the request and the GID from the client, and comparing the received GID against a previously recorded GID;

if the received GID matches the recorded GID, incrementing the recorded GID, and returning it to the client as the new GID; and

if the received GID does not match the recorded GID, reporting an affinity break between the client and the server.

11.    (Original)    The method as recited in claim 10, further comprising detecting affinity breaks between a plurality of clients and a server, wherein each client has a unique user ID.

12.    (Original)    The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising sending an affinity command with each request from a client, such that the affinity command combines the GID with the user ID of the client sending the request, and detecting an affinity break with a particular client among the plurality of clients by means of the user ID.

13.    (Original)    The method as recited in claim 11, wherein the software system comprises an objectoriented software system.

14.    (Original)    The method as recited in claim 12, further comprising detecting affinity breaks between a plurality of clients and a plurality of servers, each of which is equipped with a cache, such that affinity between a client and first server may be broken as a result of the client sending a request to a second server.

15.     (Original)     The method as recited in claim 14, wherein an affinity break between a client and a server may occur if the server becomes unavailable.

16.     (Original)     The method as recited in claim 15, wherein detection of an affinity break between a client and a server may be used to invalidate contents of the cache in the server.

17.     (Original)     The method as recited in claim 16, wherein the affinity command is sent by the server to the client and returned by the client to the server in a cookie.

18.     (Canceled).

19.     (Previously Presented)     A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in detecting affinity breaks between a client and a server, the computer program product comprising:
    instructions for the server receiving a request and a numeric-valued generation ID (GID) from the client, and comparing the received GID against a previously recorded GID;
    instructions for incrementing the recorded GID, and returning it to the client as the new GID, if the received GID matches the recorded GID; and
    instructions for reporting an affinity break between the client and the server, if the received GID does not match the recorded GID.

20.     (Previously Presented)     The product as recited in claim 19 further comprising:
    instructions for the client sending a request to the server, accompanied by a numeric-valued generation ID (GID).

21.     (Previously Presented)     A server including memory and processor detecting affinity breaks, comprising:
    means for the server receiving a request and a numeric-valued generation ID (GID) from the client;

comparing the received GID against a previously recorded GID;

means for incrementing the recorded GID, and returning it to the client as the new GID, if the received GID matches the recorded GID; and

means for reporting an affinity break between the client and the server, if the received GID does not match the recorded GID.